

R 121210Z FEB 09  
FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4766

UNCLAS COPENHAGEN 000081

DEPT FOR DS/IP/EUR; DS/DSS/OSAC

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: ASEC

SUBJECT: DENMARK'S 2009 OSAC CRIME AND SAFETY REPORT

REF: 08 STATE 132056

#### ¶1. (U) Overall Crime and Safety Situation

Denmark remains a relatively safe country. However, serious crime is on the rise and has been so for the last few years.

The number of homicides nationwide rose to 53 in 2008 (compared to 24 in 2006 and 42 in 2007). The primary sources for all statistic in this section is [www.tv2.dk](http://www.tv2.dk) and [www.berlingske.dk](http://www.berlingske.dk).

The use of guns by criminals continued to rise. This continues the pattern observed at the end of 2007. From August to the end of the year, the use of guns escalated sharply due to an ongoing conflict between biker affiliated gangs and emigrant gangs. There were approximately 50 shooting in Copenhagen, with 24 of them tied to the gang conflict.

Two of the largest robberies in Danish crime history occurred in 2008. On April 1st, armed individuals robbed the cash handling company Loomis. The company is located in Brndby, approximately 11 kilometers from the center of Copenhagen. They entered by breaching a wall. The robbers used a diversion made with spike strips and a box of explosives to paralyze all traffic in the area, including the train traffic. On August 10th, robbers used an excavator to penetrate the wall of another cash handling company, Dansk Vrdihndtering (Danish Valuehandling), also located in Brndby. The robbers stole approximately 60 million Danish kroner (10.5 million USD). The robbers used a diversion by placing dumpsters on fire in other areas of Copenhagen to distract the police. Earlier in the year, protesters burned numerous vehicles and dumpsters and the police are hypersensitive to civil unrest.

Residential burglaries continued to rise in 2008, higher than ever before (close to 44,000 in private homes and approximately a 40% increase measured over the last two years). A subset of residential burglary, the &home invasion& continued to rise as well. In 2006, 16 home invasions were registered in Denmark, in 2007 the number had grown to 23 and by the end 2008 that number had grown to 37 home invasions. A slight variation can be found to these numbers as the Danish Police operate with four different definitions of home invasion and the numbers also vary slightly in the press.. The majority of these home invasions (approximately 80 %) are still committed by younger Danish criminals living in the same area. The foreign criminals involved come from Lithuania, the Middle East and Turkey.

Currently, neither crime nor terrorist threats are specifically targeting Americans in Denmark. However, demonstrations occur from time to time and often in front of the U.S. Embassy. These demonstrations tend to be very peaceful. When a demonstration occurs near the Embassy, the Regional Security Officer (RSO) instructs staff and personnel to keep a low profile and avoid any confrontation. When incidents involving the embassy or its personnel occur, the Danish police normally respond quickly and efficiently.

Early in 2007, the Danish police implemented a nationwide police reform with the purpose of freeing more police personnel for patrolling and visibility in the public. The

reception and assessment of this reform among the public and police personnel has been quite critical/negative mainly based on slower response time, less availability, and less presence on the streets. During the fall of 2008, the Danish government granted the Danish police funds sufficient to hire an additional 300 police officers. Critical press coverage of the police reform continued throughout the year and in November 2008 the Minister of Justice fired the National Commissioner of the Danish Police and replaced him with the Director of the Police in Northern Jutland.

Minor crime, such as pickpocketing and vandalism are present. Pickpockets are particularly bad in the tourist areas and near the cruise line docks. The pickpockets operate primarily in the summer and during the Christmas/New Years season. Around Christmas 2008, police arrested a gang of approximately 30 pickpockets who were operating in the tourist area near Tivoli. Numerous incidents of stolen wallets, backpacks, passports, and bicycles were reported to the Embassy.

During the summer of 2008, a comprehensive survey of 321 European cities, including Copenhagen, was conducted on behalf of the European Commission. The survey focuses on many aspects of each city, to include some criminal statistics. For a more detailed view on this survey see [www.urbanaudit.org](http://www.urbanaudit.org).

## 12. (U) Political Violence

### 1A. Terrorism

International terrorism continues to be a threat in Denmark, highlighted by convictions in the February 2007 (&Glostrup case8) and the major terror arrests executed by the Danish police in September 2007 ("Glasvej case"). In February 2008, three individuals were arrested for planning the murder of one of the Mohammed Cartoon cartoonist, Kurt Westergaard. In June 2008, the Danish Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan was destroyed by a car bomb emphasizing that Denmark and Danish interest remain high on the international target scale.

### 1B. Civil Unrest

During February 2008, a string of bonfires were started. Initially in Nrrebro, a neighborhood of Copenhagen, and then rapidly spread to other areas of the city. For a period of approximately two weeks, hundreds of small fires were started primarily in the ethnic neighborhoods of big cities throughout Denmark.

The causes of the wave of fires were never exactly determined.

## 13. (U) Police response

In general, the Danish police are a competent and well-equipped force. The police are responsive to RSO requests for investigative assistance and cooperative on all matters regarding security for American residents. Relations are excellent with all segments of the police.

The emergency number 112 is still valid for anyone becoming a victim of a crime or otherwise in need of police assistance.

From February 2008, it was also possible to dial 114 to reach English-speaking police officers who are available 24/7 all year round however it is still recommended to use 112 as the first choice as the 114 arrangement is not fully operational in all areas.

## 14. (U) Medical Emergencies

Emergency medical assistance is widely available, though more present in the Copenhagen area. The standard in the emergency rooms is of high quality and comparable to U.S. standards. The ambulance and fire department emergency number is 112 (same to the police emergency number).

#### 15. (U) Tips on How to Avoid Becoming a Victim

Use common sense and keep an eye on belongings at all times when in train stations, tourist areas, and large department stores. Be extra vigilant during peak holidays like Christmas and Easter. The tourist areas like Strget (the main pedestrian street in Copenhagen) and Tivoli are also favorite areas for pickpockets in the summer and Christmas season.

Lock all doors and windows when leaving your home. Indicate a presence in the home, especially in the dark season of the year (November-March). The RSO recommends a timer switch on your lights for this purpose.

A central monitored residential alarm system should be a part of your security plan. Several companies sell complete packages including installation, monitoring and response to the system.

#### 16. (U) For Further Information

US Embassy Copenhagen

Dag Hammarskjlds All 24  
2100 Kbenhavn

US Embassy Switchboard: (45) 3341-7100  
Fax (45) 3543-0223

Regional Security Office Copenhagen: (45) 3341-7100 or 7389  
or 7496

Consulate General Copenhagen: (45) 3341-7100 (phone hours  
1400-1600)  
Fax (45) 3598-9616

American Chamber of Commerce: (45) 3393-2932

Embassy website: <http://www.usembassy.dk>

Copenhagen Country Council Information

#### 17. (U) There is an active OSAC Country Council in Copenhagen which meets monthly.

Primary points of contact: Paul Schofield, Managing Director, Hess can be reached at (45) 3330-1233 or Steven Brugger, Executive Director, American Chamber of Commerce can be reached at (45) 3393-2932. For more information, please call the Regional Security Office or visit <http://copenhagen.osac.gov>

#### 18. (U) Comparative Statistics

At this time, criminal statistics are unavailable for 2008. RSO will issue a supplemental report when the statistics are complete.

19. (U) Point of contact for this matter is Regional Security Jeff Howard or Security Investigator Jan Soerensen. RSO Howard may be reached at Commercial: (45) 3341-7389, IVG: 989-7389, Post 1: (45) 3341-7400, Mobile: (45) 4050-8428 or via email at [howardjj@state.gov](mailto:howardjj@state.gov) / [howardjj@state.sgov.gov](mailto:howardjj@state.sgov.gov). Mr. Soerensen may be reached at Commercial: (45) 3341-7496, Mobile: (45) 2075-0647, or via email at [soerensenjs@state.gov](mailto:soerensenjs@state.gov).

MCCULLEY